

The background of the cover is a photograph of a smiling man in a light blue jacket and blue shirt, gesturing with his right hand towards a group of people seated at a table in the background. The scene appears to be a workshop or training session. The image is framed by green and white curved borders.

# INNOVATION NICHE PARTNERSHIPS

**A guide to the coaching process**

## Publications in this series

### CDAIS manuals and guidelines

- *Capacity Needs Assessments – A trainers' manual (2nd edition)*
- *Innovation Niche Partnerships – A guide to the coaching process*
- *Organisational Strengthening – A guide to the coaching process*
- *Organising a Marketplace – A practical guide*
- *Organising a Policy Dialogue – A practical guide*
- *Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning – Concepts, principles and tools*

### CDAIS stories and conversations

- *Building Competence and Confidence in Agricultural Innovation – Stories of Change*
- *Catalysing Innovation in Agriculture – Conversations of Change*

The manuals are intended as working documents. The project supported the development of the Common Framework on Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems of the Tropical Agriculture Platform, and tested it in eight pilot countries. One key finding was that the framework requires adaptation in each country situation, and as such the manuals are intended as general guides only.

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# **INNOVATION NICHE PARTNERSHIPS**

**A guide to the coaching process**

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# INTRODUCTION

This guide to the coaching process was prepared under the project titled Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems (CDAIS) funded by the European Union. It is a global partnership between Agrinatura, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and eight pilot countries that aims to strengthen the capacity of countries and key stakeholders to innovate in complex agricultural systems, thereby improving rural livelihoods. CDAIS recognises that agricultural innovation is a process that is most successful if its actors have the functional capacities to cope with complexity, to collaborate, to reflect and learn and to engage in strategic and political processes (see FAO (2016) *Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP) Common Framework on Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems*).

Having supported the development of the Common Framework on Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems (also known as the TAP framework), the project then put into practice the Framework's principles, tools and processes in eight countries: four in Africa (Angola, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia and Rwanda), two in Asia (Bangladesh and Laos) and two in Central America (Guatemala and Honduras). It brought together key partners and actors to address commonly identified challenges and opportunities in specific regions or within particular value chains. The project operates at two levels within each country: the national agricultural innovation system (AIS) level and at local level, in agricultural innovation niche partnerships. At each of these two levels – also called the 'dual pathway' (FAO, 2016) – it intervenes in three dimensions: individual, organisational and national levels.

In each of the eight pilot countries, CDAIS engaged trained National Innovation Facilitators (NIFs) to facilitate the development of functional capacities of actors at either of different levels of operation. In the course of project implementation, the global CDAIS team recognised the need for a coaching process guide, because NIFs needed regular support and guidance. Over time, different types of coaching support were provided to the NIFs and organisations based on the context and resources available. This guide brings together the basic ideas and concepts used for stimulating and engaging NIFs in the process.

For CDAIS project purposes, this guide serves as a resource for several groups of individuals.

- Lead coordinators (in CDAIS these were the Agrinatura Focal Persons) who coordinate the adaptation and use of project concepts at country level can use this guide to coach NIFs and other team members.

- National Innovation Facilitators (NIFs) who support the actors in innovation niche partnerships, it provides information on the different stages of the innovation coaching process – i.e. the general methodology of engaging, supporting and coaching actors in the partnerships.
- Others, such as national coordinators, managers, capacity development and agricultural innovation system specialists.

The goal of the coaching process is to strengthen the capacities of the NIFs in facilitating the agricultural innovation niche partnerships to: (i) identify their needs to formulate a shared vision and objectives of working together in a partnership; (ii) implement agreed actions; (iii) reflect and capitalise on the partnership's achievements and observed changes; and (iv) adjust and fine-tune the plans accordingly.

The guide is not a blueprint for use in precisely the same way across all countries, nor the same way in each niche partnership within one country. Rather, it is a general approach comprising a series of steps that stimulates learning and the readjustment of activities to achieve the objectives of each agricultural innovation niche partnership. Based on the nature of the innovation process, this guide is a living document to be used as a reference or resource by individuals or organisations planning to coach facilitators of innovation niche partnerships or similar initiatives.

## General concepts

### Facilitation

Facilitation is a deliberate intervention that aims at improving the interaction and relationships between individuals, organisations and their social, cultural and political structures through a process of networking, social learning and negotiation (Leeuwis and Aarts, 2011).

'Facilitation' literally means to 'make things easy', from the Latin and French *facile*, *facil* in Spanish, translated as 'easy' in English. It involves helping a person or team to identify and achieve its objectives, by leading them through a set of steps to plan, act (within a team, as well as with others outside), learn and re-plan so that they can continually improve.

### The role of the facilitator within the niches of innovation

The role of the facilitator is crucial for the interaction and joint learning of actors in an agricultural innovation system (AIS). The capacity development process for AIS and the implied system-wide learning require skillful facilitation carried out

# INTRODUCTION

by people whose role goes beyond the linking of actors to relevant sources of experience and knowledge. They should be able to handle possible misunderstandings and even conflicts between actors with divergent opinions and interests.

Facilitators must be able to create trust between the actors to promote the learning process and to support the actors to follow up and reflect on the transformation process. In addition, these facilitators will be key to ensure learning throughout the system, to follow the change process and identify challenges and requirements to foster a favourable environment, bringing this knowledge to broader learning events.

## Coaching

‘Coaching’, as used in CDAIS and this document, means supporting a learner or client (individual or group) to achieve a pre-identified and specific personal or professional goal by combining targeted training in new knowledge and skills

with follow-up guidance, support and mentoring as the new knowledge and skills are applied and further developed in practice (adapted from Passmore, 2016). Therefore, coaching goes beyond simple training. A coach accompanies the coached by asking questions and giving guidance that will improve the capacity of the coached to reflect, learn, overcome barriers and grow.

Few agricultural professionals are specifically taught how to facilitate multi-stakeholder processes as part of their professional development. In fact, the ability to facilitate multi-stakeholder interaction in partnerships such as the innovation niche partnerships in CDAIS can only be developed through learning from hands-on interaction and thereby building experience, which itself requires regular mentoring by professional facilitators. A well-designed coaching and mentoring protocol for NIFs as part of this process can greatly improve their learning on how to facilitate and develop into coaches themselves.

## Box 1. Roles of the National Innovation Facilitators

**Facilitation:** The NIF meets and manages periodic meetings of the actors in the innovation niche partnership. The meetings are intended to identify challenges and the strategic actions required to overcome them. The NIF ensures that all members can express their views and helps the actors in the partnership find common ground for action. S/He safeguards the overall process for actors of the partnership by fostering relationships, coordinating interactions, facilitating negotiations and guiding collective learning.

**Broker:** The NIF builds relationships with other relevant actors and invites them to collaborate with the niche partnership. This may include the mobilisation of support and resources for activities undertaken by the niche partnership.

**Technical support:** The NIF can provide technical advice or link the niche partnership to other actors that can provide relevant information; s/he can also request more studies or consultations to identify or confirm problems and the knowledge needs of the innovation niche partnership.

**Advocacy:** The NIF can help the innovation niche partnership advocate for policy change, generate new business models or stimulate new relationships among stakeholders, and gain acceptance and support from those who matter.

**Administration:** The NIF has responsibilities in financial management and reporting to the project and other partners.

**Monitoring, evaluating, learning and documenting:** The NIF ensures that meetings and the process are well documented and informed by relevant stakeholders and other parties; s/he stimulates reflection and learning based on the actions initiated, as well as the general innovation process.

## Principles of coaching

Below are a few principles of coaching adapted from iCRA (2018).

- A coach is open, reliable and a good communicator. S/He is self-aware and able to admit mistakes (emotionally intelligent) to be able to be respected by the coached. Respectful coaching is inclusive, paying attention to gender-sensitivity as well as other factors that might make some participants less empowered than others. These characteristics will help form a bond of trust between the coach and the coached, a bond that allows for self-development and growth.
- A coach empowers the coached to have control over the development and innovation processes in which they are involved. Therefore, coaching builds on what people already know and want/need to learn.
- A coach stimulates a learning process that is an active, discovery-based, learning-by-doing and experiential process. This is achieved through iterative planning and reflection cycles. It is important to design coaching by reflecting on experiences and adapting them where needed.
- A coach works on becoming redundant. In the beginning, there may be more need for a coach's support, as a sounding board to solve problems as they arise. However, the coached works on being able to stand on their own two feet, and coaching become less necessary over time.

## Facilitation of the innovation niche partnership

In the CDAIS project, an innovation niche partnership is a unique situation when people are willing or open to innovate or work together towards a shared goal or objective. It is a locus of learning and/or experimentation on innovation that has the potential, if managed strategically, to see sustainable transformation (Common Framework, 2016). It is spaces in time in which a group of actors become part of a learning process. This learning process requires facilitation, in which the NIFs play a major role. In turn, the NIFs and other actors in the innovation niche partnership go through a coaching process. The coaching process at the niche partnership level is conducted in various stages (Figure 1).

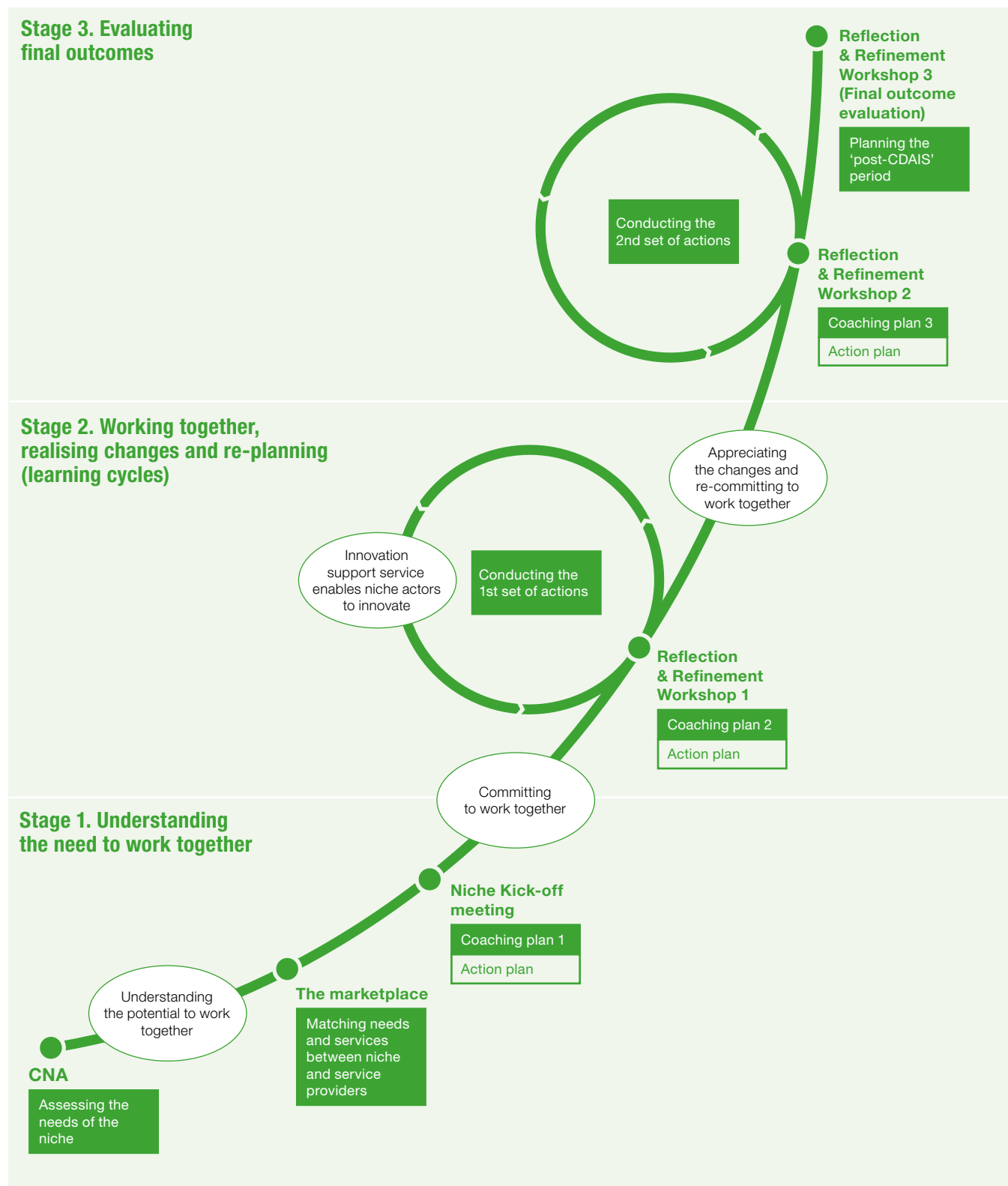
Each stage in the coaching process is defined by the achieved outcome(s) or objective(s) of the partnership. There are three defined stages which could be described as critical events in the evolution of the partnership: Stage 1. Actors commit to work together; Stage 2. Actors are mobilised to conduct the first set of actions, appreciate the changes observed due to working together and re-commit to work together; and Stage 3. The second set of actions is conducted, changes are appreciated, and the actors re-commit to work together. In each stage, relationships, confidence and trust in working together are strengthened.

This guide describes these three stages and suggests the steps, including the resources, that could be used, the people who should be involved and their responsibilities. It might give the impression that the process is linear, with chronological steps. Please note that this presentation is a simplification of reality. When an assessment is conducted, it does not end when the gaps are identified; rather, the assessment continues throughout the coaching process as each action, its outputs and outcomes are diagnosed. As the process moves forward, the level of understanding of the innovation niche partnership increases.



# INTRODUCTION

Figure 1. The coaching process at the niche partnership level



STAGE 1

# **Understanding the need to work together**

# STAGE 1 – UNDERSTANDING THE NEED TO WORK TOGETHER

## Stage 1 / Step 1 Assessing the needs for functional capacities

An assessment of the needs for functional capacities is conducted when the innovation niche partnership is identified and confirmed by the country team and project steering committee. Each innovation niche partnership should have a brief profile to provide background information to assist in designing the capacity needs assessment.

🔄 OBJECTIVES	📄 OUTPUTS	👥 RESPONSIBILITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the partnership's capacity needs</li> <li>Formulate the partnership's vision and objectives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacity needs assessment report</li> <li>Capacity development action plan</li> <li>Data sets on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacity assessment questionnaire</li> <li>NIF radar</li> <li>Network analysis</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Lead actors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead National Innovation Facilitator</li> <li>Country Project Manager</li> <li>National Innovation Facilitators</li> </ul> <p><b>Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agrinatura Focal Person</li> </ul> <p><b>Participants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relevant niche actors</li> </ul>

### Preparations

NIFs are identified through competitive calls within the country. Each niche partnership has at least one assigned facilitator. At the preliminary stage, select at least two potential facilitators for each niche. The NIFs are trained on how to conduct the functional capacity needs assessment. *Capacity Needs Assessments – A trainers' manual* (2nd edition) is available at <https://cdais.net/publications>.

### Materials/Tools needed

- Capacity questionnaires
- Coloured paper/markers
- Masking tape/'Blu-Tack'
- Flipcharts

### Steps

The functional capacity needs assessment is conducted through three major visits to the innovation niche partnership (Figure 2). Each of the visits is described below. A detailed guide is found in the *Trainer's Manual: Facilitating Capacity Needs Assessment*.

**Visit 1.** Initiate the functional capacity needs assessment with a visit to the innovation niche partnership. This visit

raises awareness among the actors in the innovation niche partnership. It allows the NIF and the CDAIS country team to develop a deeper understanding of the partnership. The objective of this visit is to learn the history of the partnership or initiatives (if there is no formal partnership yet). The history is drawn using the timeline tool. At the end of the first visit, the NIF knows the key actors, their roles and previous investments/initiatives related to the theme or focus of the innovation niche partnership.

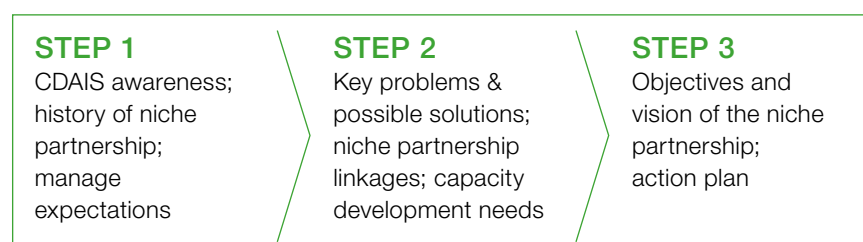
**Visit 2.** The objective is to identify key problems and possible solutions. The innovation niche partnership is assessed as part of a network of actors with whom the relationship can be strengthened. Identify the functional capacity gaps of the actors that hinder their engagement in the innovation niche partnership and other relevant networks.

**Visit 3.** The objective is to identify the shared vision of the innovation niche partnership. The actors jointly formulate the vision and objectives.

### Background resources

*Capacity Needs Assessments – A trainers' manual*, with session plans and exercise sheets (<https://cdais.net/publications>)




Figure 2. Flow of events in a niche partnership capacity needs assessment



# STAGE 1 – UNDERSTANDING THE NEED TO WORK TOGETHER

## Stage 1 / Step 2 Designing the niche coaching plan

Each of the innovation niche partnerships has a coaching plan. The coaching plan is a tool that documents the evolution of the partnership. It is drafted by consolidating the information gathered during the initial phase of the project (i.e. niche profiling and functional capacity needs assessment). In practical terms, it summarises and documents what the shared objectives of the partnerships, organisations or individuals are, and why and how they are working together to achieve them. In CDAIS, each country has a coaching team consisting of the AFP, the CPM, capacity development experts assigned to specific tasks and NIFs assigned to specific innovation niche partnerships. The NIFs facilitate and coach the respective innovation niche partnerships based on the coaching plan.

 OBJECTIVES	 OUTPUTS	 RESPONSIBILITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To assemble the results of the capacity needs assessment</li><li>• Define desired behaviour changes to achieve objectives</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Coaching plan draft 1</li></ul>	<p><b>Lead actors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lead National Innovation Facilitator</li><li>• National Innovation Facilitators</li></ul> <p><b>Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Agrinatura Focal Person</li><li>• Country Programme Manager</li></ul>

### The coaching plan...

- facilitates the process of defining the objectives and vision (jointly developed by the actors of the innovation niches), and guides the implementation of the capacity development activities, hence ensuring: (i) that each innovation niche partnership responds to the real interests of the actors; and (ii) its continuity and sustainability after the project cycle;
- helps the NIF coordinate, record and document all major activities, commitments and changes among the actors in the niche partnership;
- is owned by the innovation niche partnership and a coaching team which agreed to support the partnership at all stages of the coaching process. Team members engage whenever their skills or support are needed;
- enables measurement of progress in strengthening the functional capacities of individuals and organisations; and integrates the monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) system in the learning cycle, allowing for a cohesive process of reflection and adjustment of actions that is documented throughout the learning process.

The coaching plan is recorded in an Excel file (see <https://cdais.net/publications>), with sheets as its elements, as described below:

- **Baseline** provides general information about the innovation niche partnership, such as its composition, characteristics of innovation, and challenges to achieving objectives. Information is based on the niche profiling and the functional capacity needs assessment.
- **Why?** Describes the main reasons for working in an innovation niche partnership (innovative aspects that exist within the niche partnership or the problem to be solved).
- **Who?** Identifies the key actors needed to achieve changes, hence attain the priority objectives. Each actor is engaged to analyse the gaps in its functional capacities to achieve these changes.
- **What?** Explains the expected changes (signs of progress) required by each actor to achieve the priority objectives.
- **How?** Describes the activities to be carried out to achieve each of the objectives. This serves as the guide to the implementation of activities at the innovation niche partnership level.

# STAGE 1 – UNDERSTANDING THE NEED TO WORK TOGETHER

To guide reflection and adjustment of the plan during implementation, the elements are:

- **Reflection and refinement (R&R) at different points in the learning cycle (t1, t2 and t3)** describes the achievements, successes, failures and lessons learnt after certain activities or actions are conducted by the innovation niche partnerships.
- **What** (at t1, t2 and t3) describes the observed changes in behaviour and practices of the actors in the partnership, compared to expected changes required to achieve the objectives.
- **How** (at t1, t2 and t3) lists the continuing or new activities identified based on the reflections. It can contain agreed changes to the plan.

## Preparations

Before starting to formulate the coaching plan, it is essential to fully understand its logic and to have the results of the capacity needs assessment to hand. Ideally the capacity needs assessment report has been finalised or is available as an advanced draft covering most of the information collected during the capacity needs assessment visits or consultations with actors in the partnerships.

## Material/Tools needed

- Capacity needs assessment report
- Coaching plan
- Laptop and projector

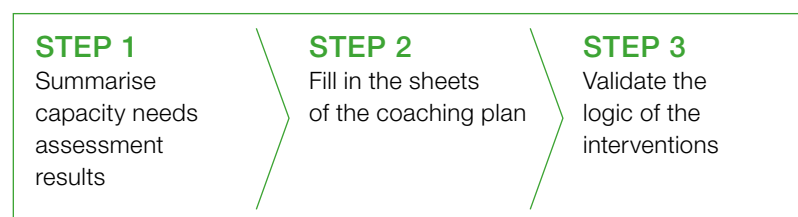
## Steps

1. Summarise the results of the capacity needs assessment, and highlight the identified challenges, the vision, the objectives and the action plan.
2. Fill in the sheets of the coaching plan, especially on the envisaged changes in the actors. How do the actors need to change to achieve the expected objectives?
3. Validate the logic of the interventions. Check whether the planned activities contribute to changes in the actors. Are these the key actors that will lead to change? And if the actors change, will that bring the innovation niche partnership closer to achieving the envisaged objectives and vision?

## Background resources

'Progress markers for MEL: definition and methods' powerpoint (<https://cdais.net/publications>).

Figure 3. Flow of events: Designing the coaching plan



# STAGE 1 – UNDERSTANDING THE NEED TO WORK TOGETHER

## Stage 1 / Step 3 Validating the niche partnership coaching plan

After the niche partnership coaching plan has been created, the revised action plan is presented for validation by a wider audience of relevant national AIS actors (e.g. in the case of CDAIS, it could be the national working group/technical committee on AIS). In some countries, the coaching plan is validated by presenting it at the market place (see next chapter). In some countries, the action plans were validated at niche partnership level only (see kick-off workshop) and not at national level.

🔄 OBJECTIVES	📄 OUTPUTS	👥 RESPONSIBILITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The country team and representatives of the innovation niche partnership own the coaching plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Validated coaching plan for the innovation niche partnership with defined activities, resources, responsibilities and timeframe</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lead actor</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead National Innovation Facilitator</li> </ul> <p><b>Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agrinatura Focal Person</li> <li>Country Programme Manager</li> </ul> <p><b>Participants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Innovation Facilitators</li> <li>Niche partnership representatives</li> <li>Relevant national actors</li> </ul>

### Preparations

- Decide how best to present the key elements of the coaching plan (baseline, why, who, what and how). Ensure that the presentation is engaging without being too detailed (e.g. poster containing the niche's vision, priority objectives, key actors to be engaged, key changes to be achieved and how – see example at <https://cdais.net/publications>). Each sheet of the coaching plan can be printed for distribution and as a reference during the discussion.
- Invite the key members of the national technical or AIS working group and champions or representatives of the innovation niche partnership.

### Material/Tools needed

- Coaching plan presentation (simplified for easy or general understanding) or niche poster
- Notebooks, pens, possibly a projector
- Flipchart with markers, masking tape, sticky notes

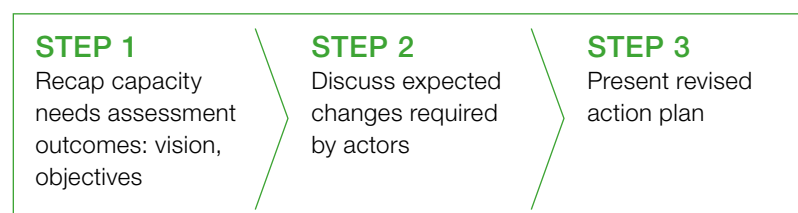
### Steps

- Recap the capacity needs assessment process and outcomes (e.g. shared vision, objectives, overview of main activities) for the niche.
- Explain the concept of the coaching plan and how it derives from the results of the capacity needs assessment process.
- Present and discuss the key elements of the coaching plan (why, who, what and how). It is desirable to allocate time to discuss expected changes required by each actor to achieve the priority objectives.
- Obtain general agreement on the coaching plan.

### Background resources

Tor for national validation workshop

Figure 4. Flow of events: Validation of the niche partnership action plan





# STAGE 1 – UNDERSTANDING THE NEED TO WORK TOGETHER

## Stage 1 / Step 4 Building a coaching team

By now, the potential activities to be undertaken by the actors of the innovation niche partnership to achieve their objectives are clearly defined. The CDAIS team sits together and defines what the niches need to implement their activities – i.e. what support in term of skills and innovation support services.

🔄 OBJECTIVES	📄 OUTPUTS	👥 RESPONSIBILITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To match niche partnership gaps/ needs with available innovation support service providers</li> <li>To clarify the roles and responsibilities of each member of the coaching team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coaching team identified and informed of their roles and responsibilities</li> </ul>	<b>Lead actors</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agrinatura Focal Person</li> <li>Lead National Innovation Facilitator</li> </ul>

### Preparations

Review the validated coaching and action plans.  
Make an overview of the needs of the niches.

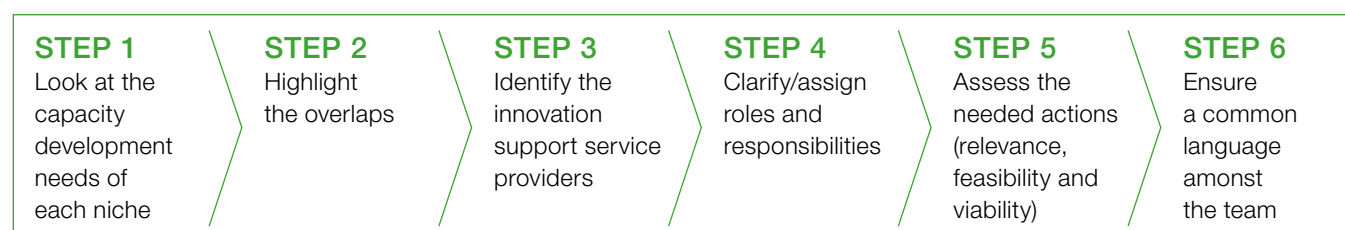
### Material/Tools needed

- Coaching plan
- Overview of needs
- Overview of innovation support service providers (both public and private)

### Steps

1. Make an inventory of the needs and planned activities of each innovation niche partnership.
2. Identify overlaps – e.g. are there coaching plans with similar activities? Could some activities be combined to save resources and enrich interactions?
3. Identify suitable innovation support service providers.
4. Clarify and assign roles and responsibilities among AFPs, NIFs, actors and service providers.
5. Assess the relevance, feasibility and viability of the action planned.
6. Ensure a shared language among team members, and establish regular communications to allow flexibility in acting together.




Figure 5. Flow of events: Building a coaching team



# STAGE 1 – UNDERSTANDING THE NEED TO WORK TOGETHER

## Stage 1 / Step 4 Matching needs and services: The marketplace

The marketplace – sometimes called an innovation fair – is held at national level to engage major organisations that can support the proposed activities of the innovation niche partnerships financially or by providing services such as training, technical advice or linkage to other relevant partners that can provide these services.

 OBJECTIVES	 OUTPUTS	 RESPONSIBILITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To match the needs of the niches with service providers and funders</li><li>• To map innovation support services in the country</li><li>• To give visibility to the innovation niche partnership</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Formalised agreement</li><li>• Poster presentations</li><li>• Media coverage</li><li>• Inventory of possible innovation support service providers</li></ul>	<p><b>Lead actors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Country Programme Manager</li><li>• Lead National Innovation Facilitator</li></ul> <p><b>Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• National Project Coordinator</li><li>• Agrinatura Focal Person</li></ul> <p><b>Participants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Innovation support service providers</li><li>• Investors</li></ul>

### Preparations

The marketplace is conducted when the innovation niche partnerships have a general idea of their objectives and priorities. This means that a capacity needs assessment has been conducted – i.e. the critical functional capacities needed to achieve the niche's objectives have been identified through an analysis of resources or services that can be sourced within the innovation niche partnership or from external innovation support services. The innovation niche partnership identifies its representatives or at least a focal person who can talk on its behalf. The CDAIS team and the lead actors of the niche partnership brainstorm about possible innovation support service providers.

### Materials/Tools needed

- CDAIS general background or CDAIS country flyers
- Facilitators
- Tables for group work
- Niche partnership posters

### Steps

#### A. Pre-event

1. The country team, led by the Country Project Manager compile a list of potential participants, including the major investors in the agricultural sector (international, local, public or private) and innovation support service providers including banks, financial institutions, government agencies, etc.
2. The CPM identifies a contact for each invited guest and informs them on the status of the innovation partnerships and on the key objectives of the event,

and establishes a relationship to understand their strategy and learn how to engage with them. Present the innovation niche partnership and share the objectives of the marketplace (networking, knowledge exchange, finding clients, etc.). The CPM asks if there are other actors who might be interested in joining.

3. Summaries of the niches, including information on relevance of the niche to the national agenda, identified capacity needs and potential opportunities are prepared and shared with external potential participants
4. Niche partners are invited to prepare a presentation (or posters) to describe their work, to help external partners understand the strategies of innovation niches partnerships and learn how to engage in relevant niche partnerships.
5. Review the innovation niche partnership coaching plan with the NIFs and representatives (champions) of the partnership. Train the niche partnership representative/ champion on how to sell their innovative ideas to donors and their capacity needs to potential innovation support service providers.

#### B. During the event

1. Present the CDAIS project.
2. Poster presentation of niche partnerships. Each niche partnership representative or champion presents (for 5 minutes) his/her niche partnership's vision, objectives and gaps in capacities to innovate. Guests interact with each niche partnership to learn about the partnership or share their own ideas or information, especially those who could help the partnerships achieve their objectives.

# STAGE 1 – UNDERSTANDING THE NEED TO WORK TOGETHER

The niche partnership representatives and NIFs should note the interests of guests.

3. Presentation of potential suppliers or partners. Each guest is asked to share information about his/her current initiatives relevant to the partnerships and to provide feedback on the niche partnership presentations and possible collaborations and synergies with them. Expression of Interest questionnaires can be used to collect information on needs from innovation niche partnerships and external services suppliers.
4. Close the session by wrapping up the main outcomes of the marketplace and agreeing a process of accountability to track engagement in new collaborations and partnerships. Indicate how the niche partnerships can be available for further discussion, and ask interested guests how they might be engaged.

5. Ask participants to complete an event evaluation form.

## C. After the event

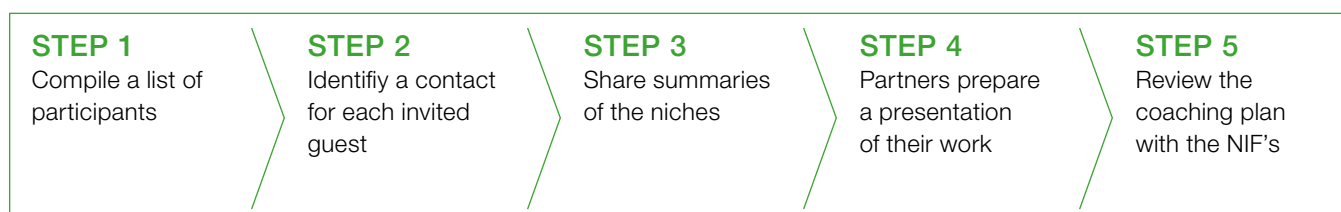
1. Each innovation niche partnership team contacts the most relevant service provider. They could be assisted by the Lead NIF or CPM.
2. Formal (or informal) agreements are established when both parties agree on activities. Indicate the specific activity to be conducted, resources required and niche partnership actors to be engaged.

## Background resources

- World café methodology ([www.theworldcafe.com/key-concepts-resources/world-cafe-method/](http://www.theworldcafe.com/key-concepts-resources/world-cafe-method/))
- Organising multi-stakeholder 'marketplaces'. Guidelines (<https://cdais.net/publications>)

Figure 6. Flow of events: Innovation fair / market place

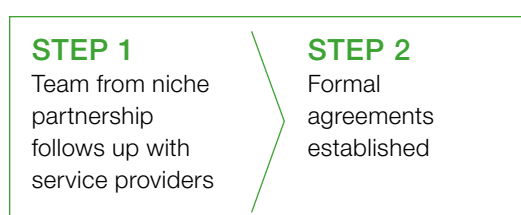
## A. Pre-event



## B. During the event






## C. After the event



# STAGE 1 – UNDERSTANDING THE NEED TO WORK TOGETHER

## Stage 1 / Step 5 Agreeing on mutual commitment: Kick-off workshop

During the innovation fair (also called market place), service providers or investors might respond to some of the needs of the niches. These potential partners can be invited to the kick-off workshop to meet and get to know the key actors in the partnership. A road map will be produced in the workshop – e.g. a list of activities in the action plan will be broken down into tasks to be undertaken by the different actors, and the actors commit to perform the tasks.

 OBJECTIVES	 OUTPUTS	 RESPONSIBILITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To officially launch the activities at the niche partnership level</li><li>• To get the niche partnership actors motivated</li><li>• To increase ownership of and responsibility for the activities at the niche partnership level</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Niche partnership action plan validated and owned by the niche partnership actors</li></ul>	<p><b>Lead actors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• National Innovation Facilitators</li><li>• Niche partnership representative</li></ul> <p><b>Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Agrinatura Focal Person</li><li>• Lead National Innovation Facilitator</li></ul> <p><b>Participants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Niche partnership actors</li><li>• Key innovation support service providers</li></ul>

Note that as soon as you start implementing activities, these will likely lead to new activities and, therefore, a modification of the plan. Thus, there is never going to be a final action plan.

### Preparations

The kick-off workshop will take place when the coaching team (coordinated by the NIF) has clarity on what it can offer to the innovation niche partnership in response to its coaching plan. This clarity is derived from knowing the financial resources available and from having identified potential innovation support service providers through the market place event. Having included the support and input identified at the market place event, the NIF and the leaders of the innovation niche partnership communicate a simplified version of the action plan to the niche partnership actors. The NIF should adopt the most convenient method for presenting this.

### Material/Tools needed

- Flipchart and markers
- Computer and Projector
- Meeting room for plenary session and group work
- Local-language translator if needed

### Steps

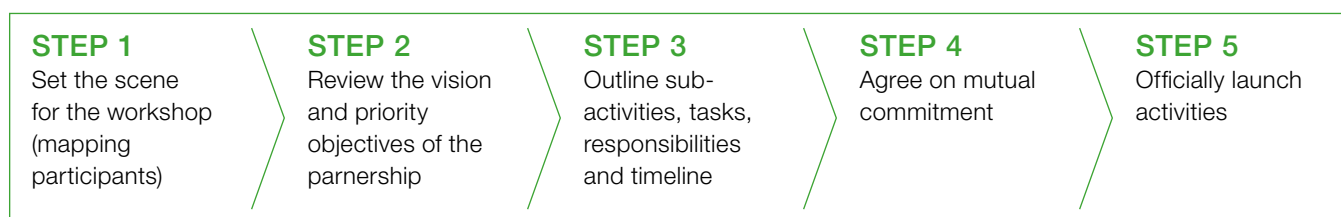
- 1. Set the scene for the workshop** (and, if needed, map the participants), so that all participants can get to know each other. It is important to note that:
  - a. If the facilitator is not from the region or geographical area, it is important that s/he gains a general understanding of the location of the niche partnership actors;
  - b. Some niche partnership actors (organisations) may send different representatives to each meeting;
  - c. Not all actors in the partnership were present at the market place; and
  - d. Innovation support service providers invited might be meeting the actors for the first time. Let the participants introduce themselves – i.e. the organisation they represent, and the reason they are there or the contribution they can offer. Another idea is to draw a value chain and ask the participants to position themselves along the chain. At the end of this session, remind the participants of the project objectives and the current status of its implementation.
- 2. Review the vision and priority objectives of the partnership.** If the actors in the partnerships were highly involved in the preparations for the innovation fair, provide them with a quick presentation on its outcomes.
  - If not, then engage the participants in a discussion to reiterate their shared vision and objectives. If possible, use the rich picture approach. If there are more than 15 participants, create two groups to conduct this exercise.

# STAGE 1 – UNDERSTANDING THE NEED TO WORK TOGETHER

- Verify whether this vision and these objectives still align with those written in the niche partnership coaching plan. If they do not, then discuss with the participants why there has been a change. It could be due to environmental changes in the community or new knowledge acquired by the participants. This session should end with a well-defined vision and objectives agreed and understood by all the actors in the partnership.
- Present the priority objectives (if they are not different); otherwise, summarise the previous session and re-emphasise the vision and priority objectives.
- Engage the participants in a discussion to identify or remind them of the key actors to be involved to drive the achievement of the objectives. Or engage them in a discussion to identify potential solutions to challenges being faced. Facilitate the discussions so that the actors are made aware of the changes in behaviours and practices required to achieve these objectives. This session should end with progress markers for each actor confirmed or validated by the actors themselves. It is important that each actor owns the changes required.

- 3. Outline sub-activities, tasks, responsibilities and timeline.** If the vision and objectives did not change from previous sessions, together with the participants, outline the sub-activities, tasks, responsibilities and timeline derived from the niche partnership action plan. If they did change, then engage the participants to list these items together. The niche partnership action plan might also have changed following the market place. Work in groups to determine the tasks that these activities involve and assign responsibilities, resources needed and deadlines. Use the road map template.
- 4. Agree on mutual commitment.** Based on the list of actions, discuss with each actor concerned (including the service providers) how to seal their commitment to act as agreed. A formal letter of commitment might be required, or sometimes an informal commitment process is observed among actors in the partnership. At the end of the session, ensure that each actor has a full understanding of its commitments, as well as those of other actors, in relation to the partnership.
- 5. Officially launch the activity calendar,** possibly with some festivities based on existing cultural norms.

Figure 7. Flow of events: Kick-off workshop



## STAGE 2




**Working together,  
realising changes  
and re-planning  
(learning cycles)**



## STAGE 2 – LEARNING CYCLES

### Stage 2 / Step 1 Doing: the action phase

After the kick-off workshop, all participants have a clear road map for action. The action phase is the moment when actors in the niches jointly conduct activities defined to achieve their shared objectives. These activities could include facilitated negotiation with financial partners or skills training for developing business plans. Skills training should be designed jointly with the NIF or niche partnership representative to ensure that joint learning is integrated into the partnership.

 OBJECTIVES	 OUTPUTS	 RESPONSIBILITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Activities defined in the niche partnership action plan are conducted on time with adequate resources</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Functional capacities strengthened at niche, organisation and individual level</li><li>Partnerships established with innovation support service providers</li></ul>	<p><b>Lead actors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>National Innovation Facilitator</li><li>Niche partnership representative</li><li>Innovation support service providers</li></ul> <p><b>Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Agrinatura Focal Person</li><li>Lead National Innovation Facilitator</li></ul>

The niche partnership actors are responsible for completing the defined activities in their action plan. The NIF is responsible for facilitating the process by coaching the actors and coordinating the coaching team.

During the implementation phase, some activities may lead to changes in the initial plan. For example, one activity may lead to another activity which was not in the initial plan. Reflection and refinement (R&R) activities, therefore, take place immediately the actors start working together.




- It is important to document the activities, changed activities, changed behaviour, etc. during the implementation phase as a memory of the project.
- This material will be used as an input for R&R.

#### Background resources

Capacity Development Interventions Factsheet:  
[www.tapipedia.org/sites/default/files/cd\\_modalities.pdf](http://www.tapipedia.org/sites/default/files/cd_modalities.pdf)

## STAGE 2 – LEARNING CYCLES

### Stage 2 / Step 2 Learning and adjusting: Reflection and refinement workshop

 OBJECTIVES	 OUTPUTS	 RESPONSIBILITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capturing the lessons learnt so far from the niche partnership capacity development activities</li> <li>• Adjusting the niche partnership's capacity development activities and expected changes/outcomes, based on progress thus far</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes, progress, gains and challenges identified within the niche partnership among its actors</li> <li>• Revised coaching plan</li> <li>• Revised progress markers</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lead actors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead National Innovation Facilitator</li> <li>• Niche partnership representative</li> </ul> <p><b>Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Innovation Facilitator</li> <li>• Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning focal person</li> <li>• Agrinatura Focal Person</li> <li>• Country Project Manager</li> </ul>

#### Underlying principles in the learning cycle

The work of CDAIS in the AIS follows **two** distinct but integrated **processes**:

- The **innovation** (action or development) process itself, which seeks to generate **new or enhanced products and/or services** that improve the lives and livelihoods of actors and stakeholders; therefore, this is captured in the action plan; and
- The **capacity-strengthening** process, which seeks to develop and strengthen the **functional capacities** of actors to actively engage in the innovation process. This is captured in the coaching (capacity-strengthening) plan.

Both processes require a series of actions to be designed and implemented.

These actions are captured in the coaching plan. This plan may be updated/adapted throughout the duration of the innovation project/system – i.e. some activities may no longer be relevant, or a priority, after a certain period or because of factors within the environment of the partnership or because some capacities need more time to develop than expected, etc.

Therefore, R&R do not necessarily have to wait for any specific opportunity. Rather, they are conducted regularly by actors in the partnerships and, if possible, with the support of the country team (i.e. NIF, MEL focal person). Such an approach requires that the actors and the country team are flexible and open. As such, the coaching plan can be adjusted as soon as the first joint activities are conducted within the niche partnership.

#### Reflection, refinement and MEL

The principle of R&R workshops is to allow and encourage the actors of the niche partnerships to actively drive their own coaching and capacity development process.

R&R constitute pauses in the process to reflect and analyse how, and how much, the capacity development activities are able to strengthen the functional capacities of actors and, therefore, shape how the niche partnership is able to achieve its objectives.

R&R are designed to offer a conducive space for the actors to reflect spontaneously, voice their opinions/ideas freely, pragmatically analyse situations and recognise the importance of joint actions. Reflection allows honest observation of changes and achievements/successes, as well as setbacks/failures.

Therefore, the R&R workshop is key to measuring progress, as it allows each actor to understand and analyse, together with other actors and based on their own assessment, how the capacity development activities supported by CDAIS are directly contributing to the overall capacity of actors to innovate.

R&R workshops are strategic opportunities for the project to **M**onitor actions, **E**valuate its efficiency, and **L**earn about the effect produced.

## STAGE 2 – LEARNING CYCLES

### Reflection and refinement (R&R) in CDAIS

For the purpose of the CDAIS project, a specific moment at the end of each learning cycle is identified to ‘formally’ organise an R&R workshop, which brings the actors of each innovation niche partnership together to:

- Reflect on, track and document the progress, challenges, learning and outcomes resulting from the implementation of the action plan within the niche partnership for a specified time period (e.g. from the initial capacity development activities up to the workshop = R&R<sub>1</sub>); and
- Refine the planned activities of the niche partnership for the next learning cycles (e.g. 2<sup>nd</sup> and/or 3<sup>rd</sup>) and/or to plan the ‘post-CDAIS’ period for the partnership.

At R&R<sub>3</sub>, the emphasis is on evaluating the outcomes of the whole project as well as reflecting on and planning the future actions beyond the project. R&R<sub>3</sub> is critical for assessing how the niche partnership will ensure its sustainability.

- The third review and refinement workshop (R&R<sub>3</sub>) serves as the final outcome evaluation of the project, but not necessarily for the partnership itself.

### Operational Guide

During the R&R workshop, the NIF and the MEL focal person team up and play a complementary role as described below.

#### Role of the National Innovation Facilitator

The NIF assigned to the niche partnership interacts regularly with each actor, especially with the niche partnership leader/champion and innovation support service providers. The NIF’s interaction is guided by the niche partnership coaching plan. The regular interaction or communication provides the NIF with information on the progress or delays in conducting the agreed capacity development activities for the niche partnership actors, and allows him/her to plan for re-adjustments during the coaching process.

The NIF is responsible for organising and facilitating the R&R workshop. S/He creates a conducive space where different points of view are shared freely. It is proposed that the NIF uses the ORID approach (as described below) to ensure that individual and collective views are gathered objectively and logically. Through this approach, the NIF uses re-statement techniques to ensure that participants express their opinions on the capacity development process and say whether it benefited them and their innovation objectives. Before the R&R workshop, the NIF reviews the coaching plan, in particular the activities and progress markers. This information guides the NIFs to observe and analyse changes in knowledge, attitude and practice among actors.

#### Role of the MEL focal person

Prior to the R&R workshop, the MEL (monitoring, evaluation and learning) focal person reviews the coaching plan of each niche partnership. Together with the NIF, s/he looks at each of the progress markers and evaluates which capacity development activities brought about changes and why. This knowledge will guide the MEL focal person in observing or analysing changes among actors. The MEL focal person is responsible for documenting the changes observed and recording them in the Excel file of the coaching plan. They can be assisted by a student or a MEL consultant, if resources are available. Verbatim words or phrases are collected (see below).

The MEL focal person has a wide perspective and is capable of objective observation, in particular of the roles and ‘dynamics’ of actors (e.g. who influences, who leads, and why), as well as how the context may influence the workshop and the attitude of the actors.

Capturing these various elements will help understand:

- The degree of implementation of the coaching plan;
- The level of empowerment and understanding of the process by the actors; and
- The level of reflection/awareness of the niche actors on their innovation process and on how capacity development can help them achieve it.

After the workshop, the MEL focal point and the NIF should go through the coaching plan again and update it based on the observations and results of the R&R workshop (see ‘Post-workshop – NIF and MEL’ below).

### Conducting an R&R workshop

The suggested method for conducting the R&R workshop is based on the ORID facilitation framework to enable focused and objective conversation among actors ([www.betterevaluation.org/en/evaluation-options/orid](http://www.betterevaluation.org/en/evaluation-options/orid), developed by the Institute of Cultural Affairs, Canada). The NIF uses four levels of questioning, with each level building on previous levels. Each of the actors is made aware of factual data and encouraged to express his/her own emotions/reactions to these facts to analyse/reflect and decide the way forward. ORID is an abbreviation for:

- ‘O’ for objective – the facts that the group knows
- ‘R’ for reflective – how people felt about the topic being evaluated; what they liked and disliked
- ‘I’ for interpretive – what were the issues or challenges?
- ‘D’ for decisional – what is our decision or response?

## STAGE 2 – LEARNING CYCLES

The R&R workshop facilitator is well prepared to ensure a conducive environment for reflection and learning. S/He has general knowledge of the niche partnerships and a very good understanding of the concept and methodology of the R&R workshop. If the workshop facilitator does not have adequate knowledge of this methodology, training should be sought for them, or an alternative facilitator should be identified.

- ! Appoint a person to take notes during the workshop.
- If possible and helpful, record the workshop.

### Preparations

Write on yellow cards (in bold letters) the agreed capacity development activities as written in the coaching plan of the niche partnership. This is found on the 'HOW' sheet of the coaching plan. In addition, write the progress markers on green cards.

Prepare or buy smiley faces (see Figure 8) that indicate emotions such as excited, surprised, frustrated, sad. Each smiley face could be in a different colour to distinguish them from a distance. Feel free to add feelings that you expect might be present in the meeting.

Figure 8. Smiley faces



### Material/Tools needed

- The relevant version of the coaching plan (Excel files):
  - For the first R&R workshop, called t1, print the Excel sheets on R&R t1 + WHAT t1+ HOW t1
  - For the second R&R workshop, called t2, print the Excel sheets on R&R t2 + WHAT t2+ HOW t2
  - For the third R&R workshop, called t3, print the Excel sheets on R&R t3 + WHAT t3+ HOW t3
- Yellow and green cards with the capacity development activities and progress markers written on them
- Facilitation equipment (flipchart stand, paper, markers, small coloured cards, masking tape, 'Blu-Tack', etc.)

### The R&R process

Below are suggested steps to use in the R&R workshop.

**1. Setting the scene** Map the participants and their expectations (see kick-off workshop). Share the project's expectations for this workshop (why and how the R&R workshop is organised). Remind participants of the implementation status of the project – e.g. which activities have been implemented since the previous R&R workshop and the progress markers.

**2. Objective phase** (Monitoring phase in MEL terms)

This is the first phase of reflection, which focuses on factual information only. Organise this session using the timeline tool. Draw a line over several flipcharts and hang them on the wall. Divide the line based on an agreed timeframe. It could start with the first capacity development activities and extend to the date of the workshop. This timeline can be easily identified from the innovation niche partnership's coaching plan and action plan. It corresponds to one learning cycle – i.e. from the last joint workshop (kick-off workshop or previous R&R workshop) up to the current period. Ask each participant to write down activities (e.g. events, meetings, training) that have happened within the period covered. These activities are related to the niche partnerships; they could be activities listed in the action plan or not, as long as the niche actor considers them important or relevant. Write each activity on its own card. To do this, ask the participants the following questions:

- What happened? Which events, policy, economic or political change, meetings, phone calls, etc.
- What do you recall a person or actor saying or commenting in relation to the partnership?

Try to ask people to be more specific if they are not factual – e.g. if they say, "the actor was working against us", probe them and ask what the actor did or said.

- Write that down on your timeline.



Review the responses as written on the cards. Organise the cards according to the two processes (innovation and capacity development). Place the activities related to the capacity development process on top of the timeline and the other activities below the timeline.

Capacity development activities should relate to the niche activities they are seeking to support. Niche activities give an idea of the implementation status of the innovation process, while capacity development activities give an idea of the implementation status of the coaching plan.

## STAGE 2 – LEARNING CYCLES

In addition to collecting important data, this phase should bring everyone to the same level of understanding about what has happened and what has not happened. For instance, one actor might think that an activity did not take place, while behind the scenes, other actors might have been meeting or organising it.

- 3. Reflective phase** (Evaluation phase in MEL terms) Let the participants reflect on the timeline showing the activities conducted. Give each participant a set of smiley faces. Guide them in the reflection using the questions below.

Questions	Personal reactions to the information
Which event/activity resulted in a positive/exciting change in an actor's knowledge, attitude or practice?	
Which one was surprising/unexpected?	
Which one made you upset?	
Which is discouraging? What made you sad?	

To enrich the discussion, let the participants write down the exact change that made them feel this way. During this phase, participants are given the opportunity to air their feelings. People may also relate to past experiences, or they might express feeling uncomfortable as it was a completely new experience for them. Give time for this type of reflection. In this phase, people's feelings are acknowledged, and they usually feel freer to go deeper into more analytical reflection (next level). If this phase is skipped, frustrations might be aired at the wrong time (during a coffee break or during the decisional phase). To go deeper (if they did not write it down), you might ask them what made them feel that way. At the same time, the successes might be celebrated. This phase will give you an idea of what the participants consider a success or a failure. Evaluate the reactions and check whether they relate to any of the progress markers listed in the coaching plan. Group the changes according to the progress markers.

### 4. Interpretative phase (Learning phase in MEL terms)

This is the phase in which participants jointly make sense of what changes were observed. Add the partnership's vision and objectives at the end of the timeline (what we are aiming to achieve), and, based on the two sets of cards on the timeline (capacity development processes and innovation activities), encourage the participants to reflect on the status of the partnership. Ask the following questions:

- How does our progress compare to the plan? What are the delays? What are the reasons?
- Are the expected behavioural changes (progress markers) realistic? Should they be changed?
- What did we learn?
- How could collaboration be improved?
- How could we have done it differently? Are there other actors that emerged that should be invited to the partnership?
- Are we still on track towards achieving the niche partnership's vision and objectives? Which elements (activities and capacity development) contributed to advancing the innovation process (or solving partnership issues)? Can that be considered a success? What worked against it or could be considered a setback or barrier to advancing the innovation? Should the steps towards the objective be revised? Should capacity development be reinforced? In which dimensions? Towards which capacities? What would this solve?

As a facilitator, ascertain general views and identify critical steps where adjustments should be made. You do not need to answer all the questions above. It depends on the partnership and on how the workshop goes.

Capacity development processes should be expressed in the form of changes in people's behaviour after the learning cycle. Noting how and how much this behaviour changed within the learning cycle constitutes the progress markers.

This interpretive phase focuses on the innovation process and the status or validity of the progress markers. Assess how the progress markers are linked to the innovation process, and how they reflect improvement or strengthening of capacities to achieve the innovation objectives.

## STAGE 2 – LEARNING CYCLES

Divide the group into sub-groups and ask them to compare the observed changes from the reflective phase with the progress markers defined or written in the coaching plan. How do they compare? Do the progress markers make sense? Should they be changed? In plenary, share the learning from the groups: Are the observed changes in line with the expected changes described by the progress markers? Have the groups changed the progress markers? Can someone give an example?

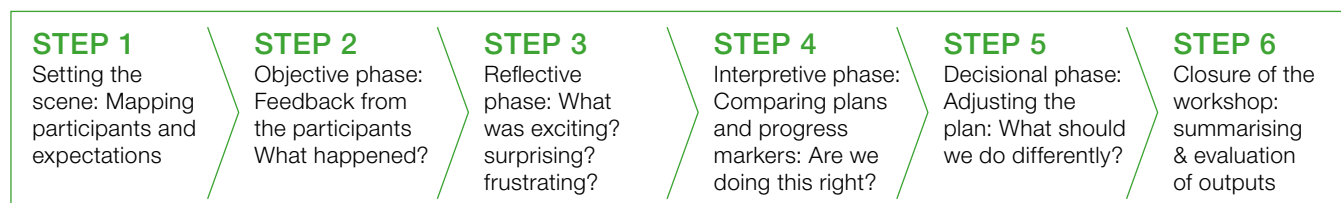
### 5. Decisional phase (Learning phase in terms of MEL)

After the reflection in phases 1 and 2 and the brainstorming in phase 3, the participants decide what needs to be changed in their coaching plan. They may want to confirm or adapt their innovation process/objectives. Together with the participants, decide on the next steps by asking these questions.

- Which activities should be maintained, which should be adjusted, and what should be added to achieve the envisaged changes in behaviour to finally move towards the partnership's vision and objectives? Should new actors be added to the partnership?
- Should we do anything more/less/differently? Who is going to do what? What are the (resource) implications of these activities?

**6. Closure of the workshop** Close the workshop by summarising the outputs, comparing them with expectations, and evaluating different aspects of the workshop (content, facilitation, venue, catering). This can be done through an evaluation form or on a flipchart in a participatory way.

Figure 8. Flow of discussions during the R&R workshop





## STAGE 2 – LEARNING CYCLES

### Post-workshop – NIFs and MEL

At the end of the workshop the NIF and the MEL focal person review the results – i.e. the information captured – and transcribe it in two ways:

#### 1. In reports

Detailed reports should be written for each R&R workshop/session and include:

- Name of event
- Date and venue
- Niche name
- Organised by
- Objective of the event
- Participants (nature and organisation)
- Issues/agenda discussed
- Information from the workshop;
  - Current status of the innovation project and the capacity development activities (what has been achieved/overcome and why)
  - Reflection and discussion (ORID = ORI steps)
  - Next key challenges for the niche (innovation process) and ways forward on capacity development
  - Reflection and discussion (ORID = D step)

This chapter should reflect the thinking of and information from both individuals and organisations.

- Next steps (follow-up action decided, including responsibilities) at innovation and capacity development levels, and estimates of how capacity development will reinforce the innovation process
- Reflection on the methodology used and lessons learnt by the country team

Reports should be written right after R&R workshops, based on notes and recordings of the workshops. They should, therefore, be based on quotes from participants, as well as pictures, especially those of the coaching plans and action plans.

#### 2. In the coaching plan

Based on what the participants have expressed during the interpretative (evaluation) and reflective (learning) steps, the following sheets should be updated:

- Sheet G. R&R<sub>1</sub>: Review the responses from the session on 'reflective and interpretive phases'. Write them in Excel sheet G. Organise the information based on:
  - Breakthroughs: These are positive changes observed in the behaviour and attitude of the actors (either within the niche partnership or among partners who have an important impact on the partnership); and
  - Setbacks: These are the challenges faced by the actors in the niche partnership. These could be an attitude or behaviour of one or two of the actors or partners in the partnership. Or they could be related to policies or decisions that affect the operation or functioning of the niche partnership.

The expected progress and actions during the next learning cycle, using:

- Sheet H. What-t1 (revised progress markers); and
- Sheet F. How-t1 (revised activities to achieve the niche partnership's expected vision and objectives).

#### Background resources

- Kaner, S. (2014) *The Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making*. John Wiley & Sons, Hoboken, NJ, chapters 1 and 4.
- Stanfield, B.R. (2000) *The Art of Focussing Conversations. 100 ways to Access Group Wisdom in the Workplace*. The Institute for Cultural Affairs, Chicago, IL, chapter 3.

- The flow of events presented here can be changed according to the needs and the development of the workshop.

STAGE 3

# Evaluating final outcomes

# STAGE 3 – EVALUATING FINAL OUTCOMES

## Stage 3 Final outcome evaluation workshop

Before the end of the project, a major workshop to consolidate the lessons learnt is organised. It does not necessarily mean that the partnership ends its existence. On the contrary, it is expected that the partnership would move forward on its own building on the support (coaching) received from the CDAIS project team. Below is a simplified process. A more detailed process is available in 'T3 Assessment Workshop' in the CDAIS guide *Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning*.

🔄 OBJECTIVES	📄 OUTPUTS	👥 RESPONSIBILITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To review the achievements of the whole project</li> <li>To assess if we achieved change</li> <li>To plan life after CDAIS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacity questionnaire</li> <li>Network analysis</li> <li>Final outcome mapping</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lead actor</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Innovation Facilitator</li> </ul> <p><b>Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead National Innovation Facilitator</li> <li>Agrinatura Focal Person</li> <li>Country Programme Manager</li> </ul> <p><b>Participants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Niche partnership actors</li> <li>Outcome assessment author</li> </ul>

### Preparations

Bring to the workshop the initial findings from the first workshops (outcome of the capacity questionnaires, the initial netmap and action plan, etc.). Print new capacity questionnaires and network questionnaires. Let people in the partnership think beforehand about the changes they want to share. Make posters with pictures and stories of change.

### Materials/Tools needed

- Overview of the outcome of first workshops
  - The outcome of the capacity questionnaires
  - The initial netmap
  - The initial action plan
- Coaching plan
- Capacity questionnaire
- Netmap and network questionnaire

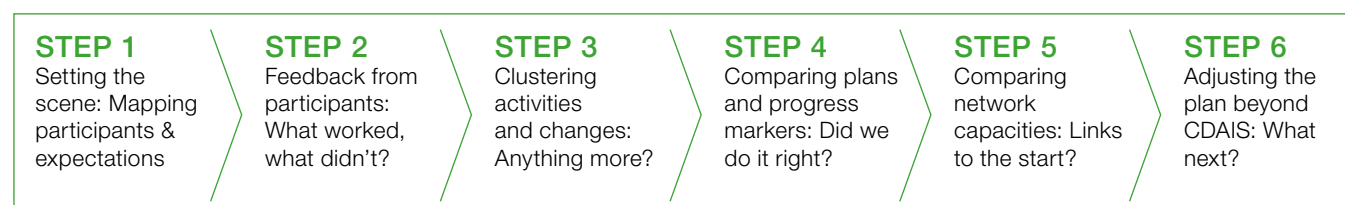
### Steps

1. Set the scene: Mapping participants and expectations
2. Obtain feedback from the participants: What worked, what did not work over the whole project?
3. Cluster the activities and changes: Anything more? Anything unplanned?
4. Compare to the activity plan and progress markers: Did we do this right? Did we do the right thing?
5. Compare network capacities and linkages to the initial situation. Actors fill in the capacity questionnaires and the network questionnaires and make the netmap again. If there is time for a first analysis, compare the outcomes with the initial situation. Draw conclusions.
6. Adjust the plan beyond CDAIS: Did we do the right thing to achieve the objectives? Capture the partnership's plans beyond CDAIS.

### Background resources

*Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning – Principles and guidelines* (<https://cdais.net/publications>)

Figure 9. Flow of events: Final outcome evaluation



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## Notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CONTRIBUTORS

*This page contains the names of individuals and institutions who led the experimental work and/or who contributed to the tests and improvements of the methodologies.*

This guide captures principles and methods of ongoing coaching processes for innovation niche partnerships under the Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems (CDAIS) project, financed by the European Union. The content of this guide is a result of discussions, interactions and application by project team members from Agrinatura, FAO and partners from the eight pilot countries (Angola, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Honduras, Laos and Rwanda).

The guide was developed through one of the project's working groups on innovation niche partnerships led by Hanneke Vermeulen (Agrinatura Focal Person for Ethiopia) in close collaboration with Myra Wopereis-Pura (CDAIS Global Coordinator). The coaching plan based on progress markers is one of the core elements of the coaching process. This idea was developed by the Burkina Faso team led by Aurélie Toillier (Agrinatura Focal Person for Burkina Faso) and Nomande Prosper Kola (Lead National Innovation Facilitator in Burkina Faso). Ideas for the learning cycles ideas were introduced by Richard Hawkins (CD Advisor) and Hanneke Vermeulen, and the practice of coaching was shaped by experiences in Ethiopia by Elias Zerfu (MEL focal person for Ethiopia) and by Patrick d'Aquino (Agrinatura Focal Person for Laos). Parts of documents developed in Spanish for coaching purposes under the leadership of Nury Furlan have been incorporated in this guide. Finally, the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) concepts developed by the MEL working group led by Aurélie Toillier were integrated in the guide by Renaud Guillonnet (CDAIS MEL Expert). iCRA colleagues, Mundie Salm and Toon Defoer also provided useful feedback to this guide.

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# COLOPHON

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